

Members

Rep. David Niezgodski, Chairperson
Rep. Earl Harris
Rep. Charles Moseley
Rep. Don Lehe
Rep. Thomas Dermody
Rep. Ed Soliday
Sen. Sue Landske
Sen. Edward Charbonneau
Sen. Joseph Zakas
Sen. James Arnold
Sen. Frank Mrvan
Sen. Earline Rogers
Stanley Dobosz



NORTHWEST INDIANA TRANSPORTATION STUDY COMMISSION

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Authority: P.L. 169-2006

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: October 22, 2009
Meeting Time: 1:00 P.M.
Meeting Place: NICTD Dune Park Station, 33 East
U.S. Hwy , Board room
Meeting City: Chesterton, Indiana
Meeting Number: 3

Members Present: Rep. David Niezgodski, Chairperson; Rep. Thomas Dermody;
Rep. Ed Soliday; Sen. Joseph Zakas; Sen. James Arnold; Sen.
Earline Rogers; Stanley Dobosz.

Members Absent: Rep. Earl Harris; Rep. Charles Moseley; Rep. Don Lehe; Sen.
Sue Landske; Sen. Edward Charbonneau; Sen. Frank Mrvan.

Beginning of the meeting

Representative David Niezgodski called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be obtained electronically by requesting copies at licrequests@iga.in.gov. Hard copies can be obtained in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for hard copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for hard copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission

Representative Niezgodski asked **Laura Kliewer**, Senior Policy Analyst with the Council of State Governments--Midwestern Office and Director of the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission, to begin the meeting with her presentation on the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC). See Exhibit 1. In addition, Ms. Kliewer distributed a MIPRC news release titled "Midwestern States submit \$11.6 billion in applications for ARRA passenger rail funding". See Exhibit 2.

In her presentation, Ms. Kliewer covered:

- background on MIPRC and its purposes;
- the federal Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act; and
- funding for passenger rail investments under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Indiana Department of Transportation

Mike Riley, Manager, Rail Office, Indiana Department of Transportation, continued the passenger rail theme with a presentation on Midwest high speed rail. See Exhibit 3. Mr. Riley also distributed a statement called "Indiana's Position on High Speed Passenger Rail Service". See Exhibit 4.

In the course of this presentation, Mr. Riley described:

- the purpose of the Midwest high speed rail steering group, which was formed to coordinate applications for ARRA funds from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin, and the city of Chicago under a memorandum of understanding signed July 27, 2009;
- the expected benefits of high-speed passenger rail; and
- the two Indiana applications submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for ARRA funding, which are:
 - under Track 1: improvements to the Norfolk Southern Indiana Gateway, for approximately \$71.4 million; and
 - under Track 2: engineering, construction, and equipment of the Chicago to Cleveland Corridor, for approximately \$2.8 billion.

Representative Niezgodski recognized **Gerald Hanas**, General Manager, Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), operator of the South Shore Railroad, for a comment. Mr. Hanas pointed out that, as a commuter railroad, NICTD is not eligible for high speed rail funding under ARRA. However, along the eastern portion of South Shore's 90-mile run from Chicago to South Bend, the South Shore takes on the character of an intercity railroad. He advocated looking more closely at these investments because some of this intercity funding could reasonably be applied to parts of the South Shore's line.

Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

John Swanson, Executive Director, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), next gave a presentation on NIRPC and its current projects. See Exhibit 5. In addition, Mr. Swanson distributed a resolution in support of the Midwest high speed passenger rail plan, which was adopted by the NIRPC on June 18, 2009. See Exhibit 6.

Mr. Swanson's presentation included discussion of:

- NIRPC's structure, functions, and financial data;
- northwest Indiana population statistics and projections;
- NIRPC's first steps in developing its 2040 comprehensive regional transportation plan; and
- review of the main areas of the 2030 plan currently in place, including:
 - transportation planning and programming;
 - regional environmental efforts; and
 - economic development initiatives.

Commission Business

The Commission paused before hearing from the Northwest Indiana Forum to vote on two items of Commission business. Of the thirteen members appointed to the Commission, seven members were present.

First, Representative Niezgodski presented Preliminary Draft (PD) 3181 to the Commission, which would establish the Commission on a permanent basis. See Exhibit 7. The current authorizing statute, HEA 1102-2006, SECTION 85 (P.L. 169-2006), provides that the Commission expires November 2, 2009. A motion to approve PD 3181 for introduction in the upcoming legislative session was offered and seconded. The motion was adopted by a unanimous voice vote of the Commission.

Secondly, Representative Niezgodski presented a draft final report of the Commission, which covers the years 2006 through 2009. See Exhibit 8. A motion to adopt the draft final report as the final report of the Commission, with appropriate additions to account for the October 22, 2009, meeting, was offered, seconded, and carried by a unanimous voice vote of the Commission.

Northwest Indiana Forum

The final presentation of the meeting was given by **Don Koliboski**, Director of Economic Development, Northwest Indiana Forum (NWI). See Exhibit 9.

Mr. Koliboski's presentation was about the steps being taken to access American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funds that are available through the federal Economic Development Administration, an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce. He explained that this has involved:

- creation of the Northwest Indiana Economic Development District, which was

formed by NIRPC and NWI; and

- the development of a comprehensive economic development strategy, which NWI is working on in September and October, 2009.

Mr. Koliboski's presentation includes a time line that anticipates the submission of an application to Economic Development Administration for the establishment of an economic development district by November or December, 2009.

Adjournment

Representative Niezgodski asked the Legislative Services Agency staff members if they had any questions or comments. In the course of a short dialogue, **Senator Earline Rogers** expressed an interest in an explanation describing the entities examined by the Commission and their interrelationships; she asked the staff of the Legislative Services Agency to work on such a document.

Representative Niezgodski thanked the Commission members and the staff for their service and declared the meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.